



Expectations and Level of Satisfaction of University Students from the Higher Education System

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Abstract: This study aims to determine the expectations of university students on the part of the Higher Education System and to what extent these expectations are met. Phenomenological approach, which is counted among qualitative research models, was utilized as the research model. The data obtained from student interviews were analyzed by content analysis. Findings were presented as themes and categories. The research participants consist of 21 students studying at different universities and programs in the 2020-2021 academic year. This study ascertained that the opinions of participating students in terms of themes, categories and codes and their satisfaction levels vary depending on the university they attend. Students expect from the Higher Education System that it enables them to get to their dream job, curricula and materials based on their needs, qualified lecturers, a foreign language education, academic freedom, a democratic environment, equal opportunities in education, an substructure, socio-cultural and physical-material opportunities, international interaction, practice-oriented opportunities for training/internship and participation in administration. The faculty or program choice is highly determined by the condition of a country, the gained scores in the central examination system, surroundings, offered orientation assistances in secondary education, the quality-perceptions of students related to universities, acquisition of employment and the sufficiency of universities to acquire a profession. Findings of this research made clear, that the level of The Higher Education System responding to the expectations of the students differs according to the possibilities of universities.

Keywords: Higher education, profession, students' expectations, university students.

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Introduction

In Information Societies, individuals are expected to have basic knowledges, life skills and qualifications in certain areas (İlhan, 2018). Due to scientific, technological and social developments, it has become inevitable that individuals -which are expected to have these knowledges, skills and qualifications- increase (Çetinsaya, 2014). University, which is considered as the final stage of education and is developed by all civilizations to reproduce itself, are institutions that are responsible not only to provide academic education but also to develop and spread science (Arslan, 2016; Keskin, 2014). Changes have been felt recently, such as the conditions in higher education and changing expectations for the academic profession, and the increasing internationalization of higher education (Teichler, 2020). Higher education offers young generations the opportunity to gain academic qualifications required by the era and to discover and develop their talents (Çetinsaya, 2014). At the same time, universities as dynamic institutions, provide scientific and technical knowledge and additionally professional skills to improve social and individual life qualities and transitions between social layers (Scott, 2002). Higher Education Institutions not only affect but also are being affected by developments (Erdoğan, 2019). For this reason, the quality of higher education and expectations from higher education institutions gain importance (Arum & Roksa, 2010; Dwyer et al., 2006; Taylor, 2010). Education, which enables individuals to look to the future with more confidence by increasing the welfare level of their lives, is considered as significant by every individual due to its contribution to societies and development levels (Timur, 2000). University period is of great importance in the lives of individuals (Saraç, 2015). The knowledge and skills, which are gained in higher education, are affected by scientific, social and technological developments. The university period is in relation to human lives of great importance and has dynamic features that stands open to innovations and changes. Students interact with other students from different socio-cultural backgrounds during university years (Özel, 2006). During this period, students deal with problems such as living apart

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from their families, loneliness, accommodation and nutrition, what they are doing in their spare time, take different responsibilities and face different concerns and expectations (Kır, 2007). Students endure the problems they experience with the expectation that they will gain many qualifications necessary for their academic, professional and social lives by actively participating in academic, social and cultural activities (Arslan, 2016; Bista, 2012; Krishnan & Vrcelj, 2009).

The expectations of students from higher education include education, social environment, work and internship, location and entertainment opportunities, nutrition and shelter needs, transportation and communication networks (Timur, 2000). Studies have shown that students' expectations from higher education are educational, social, cultural, sportive and research opportunities (Çapuk, 2011; Kalaycı et al., 2011). In this process, factors such as the location of the university and its socio-economic level, relations inside the university and accommodation are among student expectations (Dursun & Aytaç, 2009). As in all levels of education, students in higher education should actively participate in academic, social and cultural activities (Ilhan et al., 2018). The higher education process is an important development in which young people different experiences in view of their academic, personal and social lives and it is also a qualified education process that meets their expectations. The skills they acquire ensure that the needs and expectations of the society are met (Gizir, 2005; Şahin et al., 2011). There is a growing body of evidence showing that many students arrive at university with unrealistic expectations (Crisp et al., 2009; Kandiko Howson & Mawer, 2013; Lowe & Cook, 2003; Murtagh, 2010; Smith & Hopkins, 2005).

University education affects students' perceptions of their future and lifestyles towards developing their personalities (Yenen & Gözlu, 2003). However, technology, globalization and social dynamics cause uncertainties in young people's future designs. For this reason, universities should offer opportunities to meet students' future expectations and take measures to eliminate uncertainties (Tuncer, 2011). As an individual, university students generally live with their individual developmental problems in an environment that creates different expectations in university life (Çuhadaroğlu, 1989). It is very important that universities offer the future expectations of higher education students and the opportunities to meet these expectations. In this research, it is aimed to determine the expectations of university students from the Higher Education System and solution proposals in order to meet these expectations.

In line with this general purpose, answers to the following questions were sought:

1. What are the students' expectations from the higher education system?
2. Are the expectations of university students from Turkish higher education being met?

Methodology

Research Design

Qualitative research techniques were used in this research. This research technique is an approach that focuses on investigating and understanding social phenomena realistically and holistically in natural surroundings, using various qualitative data collection methods with an understanding conditioned on theory (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2011). By the data analysis, the qualitative research model reveals people's experiences by way of phenomenological design. Phenomenology, which is the most fundamental approach of qualitative research, is the definition of a phenomenon (event, situation or concept) in terms of the experiences of one or more individuals (Christensen et al., 2015). The phenomenological approach asserts that individuals create meanings in the social environment they live in and the relationships they establish and redefine their social world with their individual subjectivity (Kümbetoğlu, 2005). In this context, the expectations of higher education students participating in the research from higher education in terms of personal perceptions and experiences were examined.

Sample and Data Collection

Criterion Sampling Technique, one of the purposive sampling methods, was used to determine the study group of the research. Purposive determination of the selection of the research participants in qualitative research results from research purpose rather than methodological requirements. Purposive sampling technique provides researchers with the opportunity to select suitable participants for the purpose of the research (Creswell, 2013). The selection of the participants is conditioned by being in the first hundred thousand ranking according to the Central Exam. The research participants consist of 21 students studying at different universities and departments in the 2020-2021 academic year. There are different views on the number of participants in phenomenological approaches. According to Creswell (2013), the ideal number of participants is between 3-15 and according to Polkinghorne (1989), 5-25 participants are sufficient. Demographic information about the participants participating in the research is given in Table 1.

Table1. Demographic Information of The Students Participating in The Research

Order	Code	gender	Age	Grade Level	Learning Area	School Type
1	S1	Male	21	2	Health Sciences	State University
2	S2	Male	21	4	Health Sciences	State University
3	S3	Male	22	4	Health Sciences	State University
4	S4	Male	22	3	Natural Sciences	State University
5	S5	Female	22	4	Health Sciences	State University
6	S6	Female	22	4	Natural Sciences	State University
7	S7	Male	22	2	Health Sciences	State University
8	S8	Female	22	4	Health Sciences	State University
9	S9	Female	22	4	Health Sciences	Private University
10	S10	Female	22	4	Health Sciences	Private University
11	S11	Male	19	1	Natural Sciences	Private University
12	S12	Female	21	3	Health Sciences	Private University
13	S13	Female	22	3	Health Sciences	State University
14	S14	Male	20	3	Social Sciences	State University
15	S15	Female	20	3	Social Sciences	State University
16	S16	Male	19	2	Health Sciences	State University
17	S17	Male	22	2	Social Sciences	State University
18	S18	Female	22	2	Social Sciences	State University
19	S19	Female	20	2	Natural Sciences	State University
20	S20	Female	23	4	Social Sciences	State University
21	S21	Male	19	1	Social Sciences	State University

The research participants consist of 10 male and 11 female students. One of the participants is at the age 19, three are 20, another three are 21, 13 are 22 and the oldest one is 23 years old. Two participants are in their freshman year, six participants are in the sophomore year, five participants are in their junior year and 8 participants are in their senior year. 11 participants are in Health Sciences, four in Natural Sciences and six in Social Sciences. 17 of the participants are studying at state universities and four of them are studying at private universities.

Analyzing of Data

In this research, a semi-structured interview form developed by the researchers was utilized as a data collection tool. The interview questions were prepared by reviewing literature and taking opinions of two expert researchers in this field. Semi-structured interviews allow the participant to describe the world he perceives with his own thoughts (Merriam, 2018).

The participants were informed about the scope and purpose of the study and that the interviews would be recorded. Furthermore, the students had determined where and when the interviews should be held. The participating university students in the study group were asked the questions "factors affecting their university and department preferences", "expectations from universities and faculties" and "expectations from the higher education system". The interviews, which occurred face-to-face, the students' answers were recorded with a recorder. The participants' given answers to the questions were not restricted. The data obtained was analyzed in accordance with the approach of content analysis. Content analysis aims to reach concepts and relations that can describe the collected data. Data analysis is carried out in qualitative studies by coding data and reaching themes by combining the obtained codes. (Creswell, 2013). The resulting codes and the relations between those codes are the bases in terms of explaining the phenomenon or theory that bases on the data (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2011). In this context, the answers given by the participants to the questions were gathered under the themes created in consideration of their similar characteristics and the relations between them were tried to be clarified. MAXQDA Qualitative Data Analysis program was used in the analysis section of this research.

Validity and Reliability

Various methods have been developed to ensure validity and reliability in this qualitative research. In order to strengthen the validity, a detailed description was made, and the statements of the participants were directly quoted while interpreting the findings. It was aimed to provide sufficient information about the content with detailed description, and to convey the raw data in a rearranged form according to emerging concepts and themes without adding comments and by being neutral to the content of the data as much as possible (Guba & Lincoln, 1982). In qualitative research, coding should be done by experts in addition to the researcher to ensure external control in coding. The similarity rate of the data set coded by different coders is important in determining the reliability of the research (Fidan & Oztürk, 2015; Merriam, 2009). Multiple researchers were involved in the collection, analysis and interpretation of the data. As a result of the sequential comparisons made between the coding made by the two experts and the coding made by the researcher,

this rate was 85% on average. Twenty-one students participating in this study were being given numbers from one to twenty-one, regardless of their names and genders. The first number next to the themes, categories and sample speech sentences indicates the row of the interview, and the second number indicates their year of university (G1/4: For example, the first Participant who's opinion is taken at his/her Senior year).

Findings / Results

The study findings were analyzed based on the research questions. In the research, the factors affecting university and department preferences of university students, their expectations and satisfaction levels from universities and faculties, their expectations from the higher education system, their criticisms and suggestions towards the system and their opinions and thoughts on their suggestions for secondary education students about higher education were used. The answers given by the participants to the questions were the themes *qualified university* and *profession and status of the university, social opportunities and free university; economic expectation, professional skills/equipment, profession preference, practical training/internship opportunities, employability* categories were created. In addition, two independent categories are described as *central exam and country requirements*. The themes were separated and tabulated, the participant opinions, which were thought to reveal the themes most clearly, were given by direct transfer, and the information in the literature was associated with the research findings.

Table 2. Themes, categories and codes

Theme	Category	Code
Qualified University	Status of the University	Qualified Academic Education
		Qualified Lecturers
		Internationalization
		Foreign Language Education
		Learning Material
	Social Opportunities	Curriculum
		Self-improvement
		Financial Opportunities
		Substructure Facilities
		Physical Facilities
Profession	Free University	Socio-Cultural Opportunities
		Friendship/Dual Relationships
		The City/The City's Opportunities
		Academic Freedom
		Equal Opportunity in Education
	Country Conditions	Satisfaction/Dissatisfaction
		Participation in Administration
Profession	Financial Expectation	
	Enrichment in Professional Skills/Professional Equipment	
	Preference of Profession	
	Practical Training/Internship Opportunities	
	Employability	
	Central Exam	

1. Qualification of University

1.1. Status of the University

Category of University Status; Consisting of qualified academic education, qualified lecturers, internationalization, foreign language education, learning materials and curriculum codes.

a. Qualified Academic Education

Participants stated that they expect academically qualified education from higher education and they aim to receive training on different subjects related to their fields of interests. Some of the students stated that they met these needs in the higher education institution they studied, and some of them stated that they could not.

"Awaits good academic education. Academically not sufficient" (S6). "Education is very important, once the education is good, other things remain in the background" (S16). All university students want to get a good education about the

department they have chosen, then improve their relations, go further in different subjects, and find the opportunity to gain knowledge. These expectations of me were not being met" (S8).

b. Qualified Lecturers

Participants stated that instructors should be experts in their fields, capable of using technology, pedagogically competent, competent in teaching and learning, able to communicate effectively and guiding them in the learning process. Some of the participants stated that they did not have any problems in their communication with the lecturers, while some of them stated that they did.

"In no way did anything turn out the way I expected. The lecturers show us the slide shows and the exams are just about the slides. We do not use computers at all" (S18). "I do not think that lecturers in my department are qualified enough in terms of the department itself, they are not teachers anyway. They don't know the psychology of teachers either. So, most of them are doing this job in order not to face the difficulties the profession entails so they catch up with the job they do at some point in life" (S4).

c. Internationalization

Participants stated that universities should offer international opportunities (student exchange programs, job opportunities, etc.), and that the internationalization of universities is effective in their preferences.

"Opportunities abroad were the most important thing in my eyes. Because I am studying Molecular Biology and Genetics. I have chosen to study a department in Turkey which lacks of sufficient funds, trainers and equipment. Therefore, the most important thing for me how the connections of the university I was going to attend were with abroad" (S5). "It can provide the opportunity to study and work abroad. The diploma of my school is valid abroad" (S11). "I tried to choose a university that could offer the opportunities to go abroad" (S11).

d. Foreign Language Education

The participants stated that they for them it is imperative that the language of instruction is in a foreign language.

"I would change the language of education, English-oriented education should be given, not Turkish-oriented" (S7). "The number of English departments need to be increased. English is a must now. First, they don't ask you if you speak English, it is considered as a necessity. If you don't know, you've already been eliminated, it's that simple. Therefore, university students generally do not get their expectations from the system" (S6).

e. Learning Material

Participating students stated that the teaching materials offered were insufficient, not up-to-date, and did not fully meet their needs.

"In this, I give an example prepared with textbooks, lecture notes give you a great advantage. Not only materials that are taken from books, but also by following all the innovations and perhaps all the information obtained from latest articles prepare you for a better future" (S13). "The lecturers show us the slide shows and the exams are just about the slides. We do not use computers at all" (S18). "There are not enough resources to understand the lesson" (S6).

f. Curriculum

Some of the participants stated that the curricula were effective in their preferences, while the majority stated that the curricula applied in universities did not meet their expectations and were not up-to-date.

"We are researching everything from the courses we will take on behalf of the department to the annual trainings" (S13). "The content of the course, how many professors there are at university, what the social opportunities are or whether it really does fit into my personality?" (S18). "In terms of curriculum, there are many things that the school is trying to provide economically, but it does not have the infrastructure so it cannot be provided sufficiently" (S5).

1.2. Social Opportunities

Category of social facilities consist of codes of personal development, substructure opportunities, physical opportunities, opportunities offered by the city/the city itself, financial opportunities, friendship/dual relations and socio-cultural opportunities.

a. Self-improvement

Participants stated that they expect higher education to carry out activities that will contribute to their personal development to adapt to the change and technological developments and to keep up with the change, in addition to providing them with the basic skills for the profession.

"What students expect from main campus is mainly to help them socially. Because you are looking for support in the activities you are enthusiastic about. These activities can be both scientific and personal development. You expect greater support there, obviously both material and moral" (S13). "Of course, the university has opportunities in terms of personal development" (S1).

b. Physical Facilities

The participants stated that the universities partially meet the expectations of the students in terms of physical facilities, and that the basic structures such as the cafeteria and library. Furthermore, the campuses are not of the same quality on each university. Some of the participants stated that physical facilities have an indirect effect on the realization of education at the expected level.

"The physical environment does not really affect that much. What matters is the quality of education. When I compared the education I received with my dream education, I found what I was looking for" (S9). "Firstly, each university should have a campus. If students are not united, then there is no university" (S11). "A must in every campus is a learning area and a library. I am very lucky that there is a library on every campus at my university. This is very important; you are encouraged when you hear that upper students are learning there as well. There is also a social environment among you. We have a cafeteria, and we study in state university. Not every student has the same amount of expenditures in state universities. One can invest his/her money in books rather than in food" (S19).

c. Financial Opportunities

Participants stated that the activities they carry out at universities should be financed by universities and the contribution should not differ according to the fields of study or the economic income it will provide to the university.

"Students should do their own activities and budgets for that should be offered to them. We are not students who can pay five hundred and six hundred Turkish Liras per person out of our own pocket. We must do something that is affordable supported by the rectorate" (S6). "If economic opportunities are provided, I think we should use it at the university, for example, R&D studies can be done. There are so many possibilities, but we don't. When there are areas of technology-related departments, for example, not much can be done in the verbal sections, but I think that there is a lot to be done in the departments that develop with technology" (S10).

d. Socio-Cultural Opportunities

Participants stated that universities should provide opportunities for students to socialize, perform sports activities and meet their basic needs.

"We live in the best years of our lives and people want to participate in social activities. Because we are dynamic right now, but they are hindering it. There are no social and cultural opportunities that should exist, and they prevent what is. The university provides sporty facilities, and it stays there, but it does not encourage us" (S2). "I hope the university officials will not hear what I want to say because I am not on campus. The place I stay is rural, like a village. We only have one basketball court. I wish there were more possibilities. I wish there were Cafes or other places where I could eat other types of food. I would like to have an environment where I can socialize, where I can spend my free time with hobbies in places around the university" (S1). "Socially, students should definitely have opportunities. There are clubs, for example, this is when it comes to university festivals. But they cannot do each activity in all aspects, but they should be supported financially, so there should never be a social restriction at the university" (S5).

e. The City/The City's Opportunities

Participants stated that the city's facilities (such as accommodation, transportation, economic conditions) were effective in determining their university preferences.

"A metropolitan city has more social opportunities. I wanted to study in a metropolitan city because I am originally from a metropolitan city" (S2). "It is the potential of the city, it is its means of life, its dormitories, the place to stay, the food, the prices each city has" (S1). "When I was writing about the university, my aim was that it was close to my house, that's why I wrote it because I thought so (S4)". Even a city is one of the factors that determine the expectations" (S14).

f. Substructure facilities

Some of the participants state that the substructure facilities of the universities are important in choosing a university and a city and by shaping the learning and training process.

"There should be no limitations in the university, the opportunities should be good. For example, for me being a student of medicine, a cadaver should be enough. They are not people who cannot afford this, they can make a cadaver laboratory in one of the buildings. Equipment competencies, microscope, model, cadaver, the adequacy of the number of teachers" (S1). "If I talk especially about my own clique, they want good opportunities there. My university is a good one in this regard, the

meals in our cafeteria are very parallel to the meals my mother made. If I start from my own department, a must-have of a university is definitely a big laboratory. It is essential to have a laboratory where you can work individually, where you do not see others doing it" (S19).

g. Friendship/Dual Relationships

Most of the participants stated that they have many different expectations from the university environment regarding friendship relations. Some participants stated that they expected a different student environment but could not find it, while others stated that one of the most important expectations from the university was the circle of friends.

"I was expecting circle of friends. I was expecting a selective mass of people" (S11). "They usually go to the university to have fun, to go and to make friends, to spend time and to get rid of their family" (S16). "When it comes to finding my expectations for the student, everyone comes from another city and is looking for a certain thing to hold on. When you find people with the same mind like you, good times passes even if they can replace your high school friends" (S7). "For example, when I go to university, I wanted to have a group of friends, to sit in the garden on campus and to relax and to have a nice chat" (S18).

1.3. Free University / Academic Freedom

Free University / Academic Freedom category; academic freedom, economic burdens / equal opportunity in education, satisfaction / dissatisfaction and participation in management codes.

a. Academic Freedom

While some of the participants stated that there are environments where they can express themselves freely in universities, some of them stated that they hesitated to express themselves, stated that they felt insecure about expressing and protecting their rights.

"Rectors should not show their sides, they are now showing it too openly. I am just saying the truth. The administration should not be one-sided, and the rector should not think one-sidedly. You feel these inside the university" (S7). "I can say whatever I want within certain limits. I do not go too far in the political sense anyway, I protect myself. After a certain level I do not want it too much anyways" (S8). "I don't think we are able to express ourselves freely" (S2). "Actually, yes, I can think and speak freely at university" (S15). "No, we certainly do not feel free. Because we don't feel comfortable. That's why we are alone. We do not trust anyone and our feeling in terms of belonging to the university is falling" (S14). "No, we are definitely not free in the university environment. Even if there is even the slightest objection, you can never speak up if there is an objection to the exam, such as defending our right" (S18). "I don't think I can express myself freely. I do not think that we can express our thoughts because the university is also biased, that is, it is the same as the state. ...That's why you cannot express your opinions too much. We are hesitant to say anything when there are dissenting opinions in your own friend groups" (S10). "Students cannot express themselves freely in our faculty. A complaint made by them is invalid. Everyone does what they want, the lecturers determine, or the head of the department intervenes. I didn't see any obstacles, university administrations' imposed sanctions or anything else regarding students' freedom" (S20). "My problem with the university is that they discriminate politically. We cannot express ourselves freely" (S21). "I can express myself freely in the university environment" (S1). "I can express myself comfortably at university. I think this is one of the most important things. I am very lucky, it is very important to be in direct contact with the person in front of you, especially with your lecturer, because you have reached a certain age, you are a certain individual. After a few years, maybe you will be next to the lecturer as an instructor. It is very important that the lecturer puts you in that individual's place" (S5).

b. Economic Burdens / Equal Opportunity in Education

Participants stated that they have difficulties in using their education rights on Turkish universities due to their different economic competencies, and that the options offered by universities to students in accessing education opportunities deepen the inequalities. They stated that equal opportunity for everyone to enter areas such as education, health, social security, employment is shaped more by social demands and expectations, without any discrimination.

"Scholarships should be increased, because the scholarship is not enough, they start asking their families. The government should increase scholarships" (S21). "The university receives rent from us from the place where we hold events. For example, this is so wrong. I expect all kinds of opportunities to be offered to students by universities at a low cost or even free of charge" (S7). "Increases for students are very important, loans are not increased at the same rate. Not everyone receives education under the same financial conditions, a raise should be made with these in mind. I do not even include private universities or anything like that" (S5). "This is expected from the Turkish Higher Education or in general from national education. If not fully equal, then it should be at least close to each other, but it probably cannot" (S12).

c. Satisfaction / Dissatisfaction

Participants stated that the factors affecting their department/program preferences determine the belonging and satisfaction of students in the higher education process; Some of the participants stated that their expectations from higher education were met and some of them were not.

"After I entered the university, I changed it, I said that this was not going to be my destiny. I changed everything after I got in" (S6). "If I could change myself, I would change my mind. I find my capacity insufficient. I don't think the department has the intelligence required. I changed the city, the department, and the university" (S14). "If I could change it, I would change the partition. Looking at my score, I chose Medicine because it was high. But I am happy with the university and the city. I do not think that the department is suitable for me, I would say that engineering would be more appropriate. Because my communication skills are not very good so I do not think that I will succeed in a profession where I will be with people. I think that doctors should have high level communication skills" (S3). "I wouldn't change anything; I wouldn't change the university or the department" (S11).

d. Participation in Administration

The participants stated that the university administration did not seek the opinions of the students in the decision-making processes, their demands were not met, and they did not have the right to speak.

"The things I wanted were things that both the dean and the rector could do. But in such a systematic thing that no one can do, it would be very important for them to hear us, I don't think they do right now" (S13). "As a student, you make me decide as an individual, but you still make the decisions about me" (S6). "Students do not have a say in many issues" (S6).

2. Profession

Occupation theme consists of economic expectation, vocational skill acquisition/professional equipment, career choice, practical training/internship opportunities and employability categories.

a. Financial Expectation

While some of the participants preferred the department they studied, the economic returns after graduation shaped their preferences, and some of them stated that they should determine their career preferences according to the field they are interested in.

"The benefits of the department are also very important, but I thought if I could spend my life with this profession then I could continue studying it" (S13). "I think that it should be done with passion in order to eliminate the difference between medical faculties in Turkey. While choosing medicine, they look at their social status and financial gain. But when you graduate, you will not get that social status right away. Especially in some areas, you will not have that social status. In certain places you will not be an apprentice, but in certain places you will be a master. People want to become a master immediately and have that material accumulation" (S13). "University students make choices not by thinking about the profession, but by considering the financial advantages that the profession will bring" (S15).

b. Gaining Vocational Skills / Professional Equipment

Participants stated that they expect higher education to gain the knowledge and skills they will need in the realization of the profession and to have sufficient equipment when they start doing the profession. Some of the participants stated that these skills were not acquired by the higher education program/department they studied.

"I am waiting for an education that will enable me to do my job in the best way possible" (G5). "You definitely want to finish that department in the best way when every university student leaves, you want to finish it with the most important knowledge and equipment. At the moment, this is the biggest advantage for having a job, the" (G10). "The department I am studying in does not meet the needs of the profession. But in my opinion, no department fully meets the needs of the profession. University students want to be qualified once they start working, and not to miss anything when they first start. They want to get a good education" (G17).

c. Preference of Profession

Some of the participants stated that they made their career choices considering their interests and abilities. They stated that the experiences they gained during the education process and the changing conditions changed their expectations for the profession, and that higher education is a process that prepares them for the profession.

"Honestly, my ideal job is the same as the department I'm studying, I want to be a pediatric cardiologist" (G10). "I chose a profession directly. While choosing medicine, I wanted to be a doctor, but now my decision is completely different, I don't want to be a doctor anymore. I'm going to get the diploma, but I'm thinking of working in a different field. In this respect, I can say that there is not much of a relationship between the department and the profession" (G19). "I chose the department according to my dream job. I found what I expected, I'm studying at a good university and department" (G21).

d. Practical Training / Internship Opportunities

Participants stated that they needed internship applications in order to gain the skills of their field of study and that universities did not offer the necessary opportunities and did not provide the necessary support for these activities.

"But in our country, there are deficiencies even in field internships. People say I read this after graduation but was able to meet certain needs" (G1). "They want to practical education, not theoretical. You take vocational courses, and you would rather see them in practice" (G7). "The expectation of my generation from education is to practice, to apply" (G11). "I'm doing an internship; I wouldn't be able to get this knowledge if I studied at school for ten years with the experience I got during my ten-month internship. Due to the fact that it is completely practical" (G10). "Universities must have practical internship opportunities. Our university never provides internship opportunities, does not show an orientation. We studied completely theoretically and graduated. Something should be done about the professions, you can do internships in the field of computers, you can do internship in a bank, but we have never seen such opportunities. Maybe it's because of the chapter I read but they could, but we have not seen it at all" (G16).

e. Employability

The participants stated that job opportunities are insufficient after graduation, that they expect the increasing and differentiating expectations of the market with the qualified workforce to be met with the opportunities offered by the universities. They stated that this situation created psychological pressure on them.

"In fact, if you graduate from university, you cannot find a job, not in every department. Some people call college a distraction. Since there are very few jobs in the market, they direct people to university so that they can spend time until they find some work" (S16). "They are looking for job opportunities. We have friends who have graduated, they cannot find a job. We will also graduate, the work we will do after graduation and the money we will receive is not satisfactory, a little above the minimum wage. We have friends who work as interns after graduation. I think the biggest factor is job opportunities" (S4). "When people start working, there is stress. I'm already brooding about where I can find a job when I finish university. How will I get a job, how will they accept me, why should they accept me, I would not accept myself either as I am right now" (P6). "University students expect higher education institutions and universities to prepare a future for them, they expect something to join them" (S17). "Expectations of university students. We go to university to find a job as senior students and to raise the quality of life to a higher level" (S20).

Central Exam

Participants stated that there were mistakes in the way of applying the exam system in the transition to higher education. It should have turned out into psychological pressure on the students and the gained scores in the central exam mainly determined the program or the department they are studying and most of them are unwillingly studying in the program or department they have chosen.

"My ranking was a bit effective because there is a fact called ranking in Turkey. I chose based on my ranking" (S6). "There was no profession in my ideal, I decided on the department after the scores were announced. But unfortunately, there is no connection between the department and the profession I will do in the future" (S3). "In order for the system to change, students need to be admitted to schools with reference, not just an exam, with a grade point average, but these grades must be given to students honestly. In fact, it is necessary to decide by looking at the activities that the person has participated in and the voluntary work he has done" (S12). "In our system, there are always wrong questions in university exams, and a wrong question comes up. This consumes both time and motivation of that student during the exam. I do not think they get a big yield; they do not give anything important" (S13).

"Few students in Turkey can choose the department they want. It stems from the system, sticking to a single exam, maybe he could not achieve that score at the time of the exam, but in reality, he is a person who can do that job. But on the other hand, not all people with good grades study in the department they want. There is also pressure from the family, the family can prevent a person from studying in the department they want. Teachers also need to support students in this regard" (S12).

Country Conditions

They stated that the living conditions of the country are insufficient in terms of social, economic and educational opportunities, they have a desire to spend their education abroad and they have concerns about the future, and that the changes related to the system negatively affect their lives.

"Social life in our country is also not very optimistic, this is my opinion. It's not going very well either. Job opportunities are not enough, and the economy is not improving. It is very difficult to live on the money he receives. There are some of our graduate friends who work, it is very difficult for a person working with minimum wage to make a living no matter what he does, he cannot live the life he wants. (S4)". "Since I know that they find it insufficient about the Turkish higher education system, every student has a dream of going abroad, living and working abroad. They definitely go abroad because they think the circumstances are inadequate. They go abroad because they think that job opportunities are insufficient in terms of

salary. Even if we do a master's here, we would like to do the doctorate abroad. Because Turkey does not develop itself much, although students are open to developing themselves, they are willing to go abroad because they think economically. For example, brain drain is very important, so opportunities should be provided to stay here" (S10). "The Turkish higher education system is incarcerated, it really wastes people minds. I get so stressed that my hair is falling out all the time and I get tired while reading" (S6).

Discussion

This research was carried out to determine the expectations of university students from the higher education system and the level of universities meeting these expectations in the light of students' opinions.

According to the participant student views, the perception of a Qualified University consists of the status of the university, social opportunities, and free university/academic freedom components. According to the results of the research, the quality of education, teaching staff and teaching materials is effective in meeting the expectations of the students. The expectations of students from higher education are generally to have a good profession by getting a qualified education (Bista, 2012; Krishnan & Vrcelj, 2009). Students think that there is a direct correlation between teaching materials and the quality of teaching staff. With the development of technology in recent years, learning environments in which students are active can be created with learning materials that allow students to learn by themselves (Özmen, 2004). In the studies conducted to determine the quality of higher education, it is considered as important that the academicians lack of academic knowledge and use technology, do not show the necessary importance to the lessons, inadequacy of infrastructure, lack of library and resources, and their lack of scientific research (Bahat, 2020; Çetinsaya, 2014; Gizir, 2005; Özgüngör & Duru, 2014; Tuğlu, 2009).

Participating students expect to be able to receive education in their fields of interest in higher education and to have instructors who are experts in their fields, who can use technology, who can communicate effectively and who are pedagogically competent. In studies with similar results in the literature, students' academic skills, communication with students, understanding and closeness, being enthusiastic about answering students' questions, being able to explain the subjects with different examples or methods when necessary, taking the cognitive level of the student into account, academic (course selection, planning, etc.) and vocational guidance skills (Brown, 2004; Guiffrida, 2005). It is seen that the effective communication between the instructor and the student contributes positively to the academic success of the students (Graunke & Woosley, 2005). According to Arnold (2016), higher education programs should provide individuals with the necessary knowledge and skills to be successful in business life.

Participants stated that the internationalization and internationalization of universities is effective in the preference of universities. Turkey's higher education should create quality assurance by taking into account international changes, increase human resources in terms of quality and quantity, create a well-defined qualifications framework and provide coordination between institutions, and the internationalization strategy should be evaluated within the scope of these paradigms (Soysal et al., 2019). In recent years, it is one of the most important expectations of the students that universities provide quality in teaching and learning (Maskell & Collins, 2017).

According to the participant student opinions, the fact that universities provide education in a foreign language and the quality level of language education directly affect the preferences of the students. According to Çetinsaya (2014), the presence of expert and qualified instructors contributes to the continuation of both foreign language education and foreign language programs more effectively. National researches on higher education students reveal that students' foreign language education is not at the expected level or not at all in most universities and programs (Gülmez, 1992; Kaygusuz, 2002; Özgüven & Bilge, 1997; Türküm et al., 2004; Ültanır, 1998). The quality of students' instructors and meeting their expectations from them are important perceptual elements that prevent problems (McCormick et al., 2013).

Perception of Social Opportunities according to participant student views; It consists of personal development, physical opportunities, financial opportunities, infrastructure opportunities and socio-cultural opportunities, opportunities offered by the city and friendship-bilateral relations components. Participating students are expected to enable the higher education system to gain basic skills for the profession, to adapt to technological developments, to participate in activities that will contribute to their personal development. They state that they expect basic structures such as a cafeteria, library and campus to be found. When the literature is examined, similar results are seen in the studies conducted. Important variables such as active participation in higher education, academic success, personal development and quality of life after school affect students' expectations (Trowler, 2010).

Participating students also attach importance to issues such as social environment, entertainment, leisure and shopping opportunities, working relations, nutrition and accommodation requirements, transportation and communication networks in addition to education at the university. The biggest public and social areas where friendship relations are established are universities (Nas, 2017). Individuals have the opportunity to put into practice the new behavioral patterns they have learned through their own experiences and education process at universities (Gonzalez et al., 2007). A common expectation of students is that a university education will enhance their academic and vocational prospects, but also provide opportunities to become independent and to enjoy themselves (Kandiko Howson & Mawer, 2013). In

the research, it has been concluded that the happiness and academic success of higher education students are related to the opportunities of the city where the university is located. Universities and their settlements affect each other in many ways. The city's approach to the university and the working environment of the university are determined by its economic and social structure, the level of knowledge, expectations and economic conditions of the people (Kavili-Arap, 2014).

According to the participant student views, the perception of Free University/Academic Freedom consists of academic freedom, economic burdens/equality of opportunity, satisfaction/dissatisfaction, and participation in management. The studies conducted are also similar to the results of this study. Academic freedom is the freedom of all individuals in the academic environment to carry out their academic activities comfortably and without pressure (Altbach, 2001). Academic freedom, beyond being a concept intertwined with freedom of expression and university autonomy, is an area of freedom that should be developed, supported and always embraced with its unique aspect (Seggie & Gökbel, 2014). Academic freedom in Turkey has not yet had a protection that would secure it on a legal basis. This situation shows that academic freedom should be internalized in universities as a culture and behavior in our country (Balyer & Ömür, 2018). As a matter of fact, academics also state that academic freedom in Turkey is not well defined in the higher education system (Balyer, 2011).

Participating students stated that they experience difficulties in higher education due to their economic competencies, and that the inequalities offered by universities in accessing education opportunities deepen. In our country, it is seen that students cannot meet their basic needs due to economic inadequacies (Bilgin, 2001; Demir et al., 2006). It is seen that a large part of higher education students has problems with not having enough money to continue their education, lack of scholarship opportunities, accommodation, transportation, nutrition and health (Şahin et al., 2011). Participating students stated that equal opportunity is the equal opportunity for everyone to benefit from services such as education, health, social security, employment, which are shaped by social demands and expectations, without any discrimination. Equality of opportunity in higher education is possible with a fairer structure that allows students from low socio-economic status to register (Gölpek et al., 2019).

According to the participants, the level of meeting the factors that affect the determination of their department/program preferences affects the belonging and satisfaction of the students in the higher education process. According to Arslan and Altınbaş Akkaş (2014), satisfaction with the services and opportunities offered, academic expectations and social expectations positively affects the satisfaction with university life. Topsakal and İplik (2013) and Al-Dulaimi et al., (2016) state that students' satisfaction is shaped by the quality of the service. It has been concluded that satisfaction with the university greatly affects the students' choice of staying at the university they study (Ismail et al., 2013).

The participants stated that the university administration did not seek the opinions of the students in the decision-making processes, their demands were not met and they did not have the right to speak. However, according to the Council of Higher Education (2007), students are full partners of the higher education administration and should take part in the regulation of higher education and the preparation of its content.

Participating students view their profession by the perception of economic prospects, acquire vocational skills / professional equipment, practical training / internship opportunities with components consisting of employability. Some of the participants stated that they made a career choice considering their interests and abilities. It was observed that the majority of the students came with the expectation of obtaining a good profession and gaining academic and personal skills (Enterieva & Sezgin, 2016). In Tuncer's (2011) research, it is stated that the activities carried out within the scope of university-environment cooperation are effective in helping young people gain appropriate professional and personal roles. In addition, in the participant student views, it is seen that they expect the education they receive to be practical. Participants express their most important expectations as finding a job and economic income after graduation. After higher education, every graduate aims to reach economically strong opportunities (Illich, 2013). It is observed that higher education institutions that are open to sharing knowledge and experience cooperate with the industry in order to provide students with the qualifications required by the profession (Yüksel et al., 2018). Studies have shown that the expectation of high income, access to new job opportunities, gaining status and prestige are effective in university and department preferences in our country (Çakır, 2007; Yıldız et al., 2005).

Participating students stated that the Central Placement Exam puts psychological pressure on students; they made their choice of program or department according to the scores they received from the central examination system; Some of the students state that they have unintentionally studied in the program or department they are studying. In the examination-oriented education approach, attendance to secondary education is reduced to the level of diploma required for transition to higher education (Turkish Education Association, 2014). According to Baykal (2007), inequality of opportunity, intimidation and hopelessness should be seen as important negativities of the center selection exams.

Participating students, Country Policies' social, economic, and they want to study abroad because it is inadequate in terms of training opportunities, that connected to the system changes the lives of adverse effects, stated that the future concerns. The conditions of the country they live in shape the expectations of the students. University students expect to find a job before they graduate (Yumurtaci, 2018). A career-oriented approach to higher education can be beneficial (Hassel & Ridout, 2018). According to Tuncer's (2011) research, different factors such as a country's economy, level of

development, geographical location, education level and unemployment rates may shape the preferences and expectations of higher education students. There is a need for individuals who follow and actively participate in scientific, economic, technological and social developments in information societies of the 21st century (İlhan et al., 2018). Whatever the reasons for going to university, students' expectations affect their performance, attendance, probability of dropping out and overall satisfaction (Lobo & Gurney, 2014).

Conclusion

There are few studies conducted to determine the views of university students regarding their expectations from the higher education system in Turkey. Therefore, it is important to examine the views of university students regarding their expectations from the higher education system. This research was carried out to determine the opinions of university students about their expectations from the higher education system and their satisfaction level and their suggestions on this theme. The following results were obtained from the study:

- (1) In accordance with participants' opinions and their attended university University perception/qualification differences partake regarding the perceptions of education and lecturers. It has been determined that the universities differ in terms of offered qualifications and opportunities.
- (2) Participating students must have academic staff who are experts in their fields, who use technology well, who can communicate effectively and who are competent in terms of pedagogy; He states that providing education in a foreign language, increasing the internationalization level of universities, and providing international opportunities affect preferability.
- (3) Participating students stated that they expect in manners of social opportunities, gaining basic skills to a related profession from the higher education system, adapting to technological developments and participating in activities that will contribute to their personal development. Also, basic structures such as a cafeteria, library, and campus should be created.
- (4) Participants stated that the guidance of their families, teachers and professionals is effective in choosing the university, the program/department and the city they are studying in plays a role and the scores obtained in the central placement exam are determinative. They stated that their interests were also effective in choosing the program/department.
- (5) Participating students stated that in context of Free University/Academic Freedom, universities should provide opportunities such as equal education opportunities and participation in administration, which would eventually lead them to increase their satisfaction level.
- (6) Participants stated that in context of perception related to the central placement exam, the entrance exam system to higher education creates psychological pressure on students, and they prefer the higher education program they are studying according to the scores they got from the central exam system.
- (7) Participating students stated that in context of Country Conditions, social, economic and educational opportunities are insufficient and that they were thinking about studying abroad in future, that they are negatively affected by the changes of the higher education system and that they have therefore concerns for the future.

Recommendations

Measures should be taken to increase the level of meeting student expectations in the fields of qualified academic education, teaching staff, teaching materials, teaching programs, foreign language education and internationalization in our country's universities. Curriculum should be updated according to the needs of the era and the interests of the students. Activities to improve the quality of teaching staff (such as in-service training programs on teaching methods and techniques) should be organized.

Students should be evaluated in different dimensions such as individual interests, talents and skills, and measures should be taken to eliminate the inequalities of opportunity experienced as a result of determining exams. So as to ensure equality of education expenditures, priority should be given to disadvantaged areas. In order to compensate for inequalities in learning processes, teachers' competencies should be strengthened and the content of education should be developed towards this goal.

The culture of academic freedom and democracy should be secured by legal regulations as a culture and behavior in our country's universities. Students at universities should be encouraged to participate in administrations. In order to improve students' professional skills, practice opportunities and internship activities should be increased in cooperation with industries. It can be done with comprehensive and representative samples and quantitative or mixed research methods in order to determine students' future expectations and generalize the findings.

Limitations

The limitation of this research is that it was designed with a limited study group in a single province and only with a qualitative design. The fieldwork of this research was carried out in the 2020-2021 academic year. Data were collected with a semi-structured interview form.

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